

— USDA —  
**Regional  
Conservation  
PARTNERSHIP  
Program**  
— NRCS —

coming together for conservation

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Using Watershed Authorities with RCPP

These FAQs originated from an April 7 webinar with NRCS and partners. Replay the webinar at (no password required) at: <https://usdanrcs.adobeconnect.com/p3y71iti03l/>

**Q. What if property is owned by a grantee?  
An easement is not necessary, correct?**

*A. Yes, that is correct.*

**Q. Is the term “repair,” as used in this power point, defined the same way the watershed manual defines repair?**

*A. Yes. The NRCS National Watershed Manual is a policy for any work done under Public Law 566 (PL-566). It would have the same definition.*

**Q. RCPP is a proposal. If following criteria for PL-566, then is a sponsor letter to the State Conservationist required, or do you just have to ensure the proposal will follow PL-566 protocol?**

*A. There is no letter required requesting assistance from the NRCS State Conservationist. In the regular PL 83-566 program, a request for assistance is required. We want to make sure that we clarify the difference. You are achieving that requirement through submitting the RCPP proposal.*

**Q. If partners do not have taxing authority, can they submit a proposal?**

*A. It depends. The purpose of requiring taxing authority is to ensure that the sponsors have an income stream for long-term operation, repairs, and maintenance (OR&M). If a sponsor has an-*

*other source of funding for OR&M (e.g., irrigation water levy) then that would meet this sponsor requirement. For specific sponsor eligibility questions, please contact the NRCS National Watershed Team or National Water Management Center for more information.*

**Q. Is a Native American Tribe an eligible PL-566 participant?**

*A. Yes.*

**Q. When will the fillable form and data tool be available?**

*A. The RCPP fillable narrative tool and data entry tool are available on the RCPP website for partners to complete. <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farmbill/rcpp>*

**Q. Are there funds available to mitigate for lost wetlands by a PL-566 project?**

*A. Yes. That can be part of the project plan.*

**Q. What about grants.gov? Does anything have to be completed on the website too?**

*A. No, we prefer the applicants submit to the RCPP inbox. All RCPP questions should be sent to [RCPP@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:RCPP@wdc.usda.gov)*

## Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

### Using Watershed Authorities with RCPP

**Q. Does an EPA-approved Watershed Management Plan meet NRCS PL-566 criteria?**

A. Typically other non-PL-566 watershed plans will require some additional information to meet NRCS's PL-566 plan-EA/EIS requirements. Refer to NRCS's National Watershed Program Manual and National Watershed Program Handbook for specific policy and guidance on watershed planning.

**Q. What is meant by the reference to the local NRCS office...FO or SO?**

A. Start with your local NRCS field office first. Your local field office can engage the appropriate state office technical staff, as needed.

**Q. On timeline, must the "on-the-ground work" be completed in 5 years, or is it simply the RCPP agreement that expires? Can other obligating, or supporting obligating, documents extend beyond a 5 year RCPP agreement?**

A. All work funded by RCPP must be completed within 5 years after signing the RCPP agreement. Supporting work, funded by non-NRCS entities could extend beyond the 5-year RCPP agreement.

**Q. Do supplemental watershed plans (updates for economic or environmental issues) have to be reviewed and approved by NRCS's National Water Management Center?**

A. Yes.

**Q. In a watershed, if 3 out of 6 property owners have irrigation history, is it possible for all farmers in the watershed to be eligible to apply for irrigation efficiency upgrades when using RCPP?**

A. It depends upon general program eligibility and which Farm Bill program you are applying to that situation to make the determination. Contact your local NRCS field office or NRCS state office for details on program eligibility regarding your specific situation.

**Q. Are there any prohibitions to NRCS staff providing applicants advice or technical assis-**

**tance in developing their proposals?**

A. We want to remind the partners that these proposals are the partner's proposals. NRCS can provide advice and guidance, but it is still the partner's proposal.

**Q. If RCPP funding has been obligated in a construction project, must construction be completed within the 5-year time limit?**

A. Yes.

**Q. Can regular office allocation of EQIP funds be used as matching funds for an RCPP application?**

A. No.

**Q. I understand example proposals are posted on NRCS website?**

A. FY 14/15 and FY 16 executive summaries are on the RCPP website.

**Q. Can previously attained land rights be used for match?**

A. No. For RCPP, eligible matches start on the date that the RCPP agreement is signed.

## SAVE THE DATE

The RCPP Team will host two public webinars on April 14 & April 27 at 2:00 pm EST. Details will be posted on the RCPP website.